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"SINCERELY YOURS"

VERSES BY
NEIL RANDOLPH BLOUNT



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“SINCERELY YOURS”

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NELL RANDOLPH BLOUNT



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“For me — I wrote
False poems like the rest
And thought them true,
Because myself was true in writing them.”

— Elizabeth Barret Browning.

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APOLOGY AND DEDICATION.

To the Stranger:

If stranger hands should find this little book,
And turn its pages for a critic's glance,
Sure faults will show, which patience cannot
brook,

So here I give fair warning for such chance.
This little volume came to form and light
Not for the merit in its pages shown,
But rather, that my friends have asked the right
To have in shape which each may call his own.

To My Friends:

Reading between the lines which are but weak,
Save in the lenient light of friendship's eye,
Your hearts perhaps will see the truth I seek,
And from your knowledge, all my lack supply.
I did not write because 'twas good to read,
But just to make my restless thought more
still—

Now you'll accept apology I plead?

I'm taking it for granted that you will.

ENTERED IN.

In memory of R. S. B.

Out from the years of earth-life, from all its cares
 set free,
Into the Home Eternal, just over the jasper sea;
Leaving the weary body that weakness and pain
 oppress,
To enter "newness of life with Christ," "robed in
 His righteousness."

Taking in trust God's giving (great things no more
 than small),
Her labor of love completed, she answered her
 Master's call.
"Faithful in least" her standard, "ruler in much"
 His reward.
Rich in the wealth of a greater world, inheritor
 with her Lord.

Eyes that have seen His beauty in flower and tree
 and bird,
Ears that have heard His music in summer winds
 that stirred,
Soul that has felt His glory in faulty human
 clay,
Must see and hear and understand heaven's won-
 drous world today.

Hands that were ever opened to help His "least of
these,"
Heart that was e'er responsive to human nature's
pleas,
Life that was never idle while yet a need was
shown,
Today in that better country find rest and joy at
home.

Sorrow? Ah! no. Not sorrow, for she has gained
so much,
But loneliness and longing, in hearts that miss her
touch.
By her life, so strong yet tender, by her death
so brave and true,
May we meet as she has taught us, each task that
comes to do.

GOOD-BYE—BE GOOD, LITTLE GIRL.

To J. W. B.

Sometimes when I am so weary,
And little things all go wrong;
When days seem brief and dreary,
And nights so hard and long,
I hear in my heart soft whispers
From out of my childhood's day,
That come like the evening vespers
Breathed over the troubled way.

Then someway, my fierce rebelling
All suddenly disappears
Under that touch—compelling
The banishment of all tears.
“Down to the corner” I’m going
“A piece with papa” once more,
As memory’s torch is throwing
Its glow on days of yore.

I see my father, walking
In younger manhood’s pride,
I, with childish talking,
“Going a piece,” by his side.
Then from the corner starting,
(As he brushes back a curl),
I hear his voice in parting,
“Good-bye, be good little girl.”

Tonight my thoughts reviewing
The days passed by since then,
Show his life strong in doing
Of good, to fellow men.
And while my duties lengthen,
Amidst the busy whirl,
There sounds his voice to strengthen,
“Good-bye, be good little girl.”

Could cloudland glory open
To pass his helpful word,
I think the same thought spoken,
Would come as I have heard.
Out from the Heavenly Dwelling,
Down through the gates of pearl,
I think I'd hear him telling—
“Good-bye, be good little girl.”

So, in the daily learning
Of lessons hard to know,
My heart is often returning
To ways I ought to go.
Hard tasks seem someway lighter
Than once I thought they could,
And all the way grows brighter
As I struggle to “be good.”

VIOLET VOICES.

To M. D.

Roses, lilies, carnations,
What others have you there?
Ah! yes, give me the violets,
There's nothing to compare.

Some way their sweet, bright blossoms
Speak comfort, peace and rest,
And shining from among them
A face, of all—the best.

It speaks from out their petals,
The face of a mother gone,
And bending my head above them
My thought has quickly flown

Back into childhood's playtime,
On into girlhood's hours,
Working with her beside me
Among the treasured flowers.

Again I see her prisoned
By illness' tightening grasp,
Smiling on dainty flowers
Held in her gentle clasp.

And then there comes a memory,
Sacred o'er all I keep—
The precious form so quiet
In its never-ending sleep.

Resting against her garments
A bunch of violets lay,
Sent by an almost stranger
From a house not far away.

A graceful unvoiced tribute
To a noble woman's name.
As a fitting benediction
On that last day it came.

And so these violet voices
In fragrant tones so clear,
Speak their tender message
Of a sainted mother dear.

Sweeter than any other
To me must always be
The fragrance of their helping
Through that precious memory.

THE HEART OF THE HOME.

Facing the row of maple trees
That whisper soft in the morning breeze,
The old house stands in silence deep
Almost as the hush of eternal sleep,
And some way, the look of all the place
Is like to that on a dear, dead face.

Scenting the air, the same sweet flowers,
The same old shrubs and trees in bowers,
But thick at roots are grasses grown,
And stirring the tops (almost a moan)
The voice of the air makes sad refrain
"It will never be the same again."

Into new hands it soon must go,
This dear old "home" we all loved so.
Precious things beyond compare
Will go from out our fostering care.
Scenes that seem but of yesterday,
Will soon forever have passed away.

The old moves off—the new draws near,
Mantles of gayety cover a bier.
So let it be—The old home died,
When the Little Mother left our side.
The "past" is ours, to sacred keep
In heart depths holy, buried deep.

AN OFFERING.

Naught have I, Master, now to bring to Thee
Only myself, and what Thou gavest me.
Heart, thoughts and efforts
Such as I call mine
O take and bless and make them truly Thine.
Put in my heart a wish to do Thy will,
My thoughts and plans with love for Thee, O fill,
Thy Spirit grant to shine in act and word,
That what I do, may be *as to the Lord*.

A PREACHER.

(To V. V. D.)

Today I heard a sermon
That has given comfort well.
The "text" I think I cannot
Just now exactly tell.
The church that I attended
Was not quite "orthodox"
For the pulpit was a counter
And the text-book was a box;
The face that shone above them
With smile so warm and sweet
Gave the message that was needed,
My lonely heart to meet.

These hours that are so idle,
Away from homeland dear
Have wakened frequent longings
For the old familiar cheer.
I have missed the friendly welcome
That was mine on every hand
And have felt myself a stranger
Just sojourning in this land.
But now, that "stranger" feeling
Doesn't hold me quite so fast,
Since I've had that helpful greeting
Like those from out my past.

Formed carelessly it may be,
Words I do not now recall,
But the face and tone that shaped them
Made the "sermon" cover all;
They showed a soul of sweetness
In harmony with life,
Content with daily blessings,
Keeping out of useless strife,
May God's benediction touch her,
This dear preacher of His light
Who with lamp all trimmed and burning
Makes other lives more bright.

“I WANT TO BE GOOD TO YOU.”

“You are tired.”—’Twas just an inflection
That spoke half in question, half fact—
To turn my mind quickly to searching
My spent day, with all I had lacked.
“Tired?” Well yes, I was tired,—
For burdens so sorely had pressed,
But one only, of all my acquaintance,
My trouble and need had guessed.

Was I tired? Ah yes! so heart-tired!
I think even *she* did not see
How great was the weariness bearing
While yet she was helping me.
Not always in understanding,
Every burden and doubt and fear
Is the help,—but in love that is saying
“I want to be good to you, dear.”

And while she was whispering her wishes,
Kind eyes looking into my own,—
I knew, way deep down in my heart-thought
I had found that for which I had come.
Just a bit of sympathy given
By a kindly and helpful face,
And my prayer for strength was answered
In that chance meeting-place.

A HELPER.

He whistles and sings at his labor,
My cheery, light-hearted neighbor.
'Till sunshine seems brighter,
And shadows grow lighter.

Because of his song as he works.

The passer-by hears him, and slowing
The footsteps so hurriedly going,
The song heard in snatches
His own spirit catches.

From the man who sings as he works.

Far better the day and the duty,
And fuller the world is of beauty,
And truer the living,
More helpful the giving

For the song of my neighbor at work.

I know not his name or his station,
But greater than wordy oration,
The sermon he preaches,
The lesson he teaches,

By his jolly song as he works.

May he ever abide in gladness,
Where needy hearts burdened by sadness,
His sunshine may borrow
To lighten their sorrow.

'Till they learn to sing as they work.

RETRIBUTION.

The night was in June,
The weather quite warm;
The people to cool resorts
Moved in a swarm.
At a table they sat,
Eyes fixed on each other—
She wasn't his cousin,
He wasn't her brother.

His ice cream all eaten,
A second dish called—
Her own but half finished,
She looked up appalled.
Then a bit of reproof
Shone out of her eye
As she caught his expression
And heard a deep sigh.

She waited a moment
For best opportunity,
And said: "Can you eat it
With perfect impunity?"
With superior smile
He answered her soon,
"Well, no—(since you ask)
But I can with a spoon."

Some ten minutes after

He said, smiling sweet—

“Can you, with propriety,

Walk awhile down the street?”

She taking his arm,

While she smiled at the moon,

Said: “No—(since you ask)

But I can with a spoon.”

FOR JUNE'S AUTOGRAPH.

(Dec. 25.)

And there are other names, though unrecorded
Upon these pages, for kind memory's thought,
Which, written now above, their lives rewarded,
Find Christmas joy of which our lives know
naught.

That joy which comes from in His presence
dwelling
Whose birth in Bethlehem so long ago
Gave to the world the gladness earth is telling
To lift from burdened hearts their weight of
woe.

And could the dear ones out from Heaven's portal,
Speak to us now a word to write for them,
I think the message from our friends immortal
Would be the angel song, "Good will to men."

So—while their names and faces we remember,
In other days with us at Christmas tide,
Let all our hearts by memory's touch made ten-
der,
Live out a charity more deep and wide.

NATURE'S VOICES.

(To M.)

The flowers that blow,
Speak soft and low
Of the God they know,
 To His loving child.

The birds that sing,
On quivering wing
His love words bring
 To the listening ear.

The falling rain
Like music's strain,
Chants o'er His name,
 In cadence sweet.

The mountains high,
'Gainst azure sky
His glories cry
 Who formed their slopes.

Fresh blades of grass
In waving mass
Speak as I pass,
 Of power divine.

Then how can I
Let days go by,
And still deny
 The praise His due?

GOOD-BYE.

(To D.)

So much I liked your cheery word, dear heart—
Calling “good-bye” as quick you turned to go.
And though it should not be for long we part,
I wish that you might always speak it so.
If just a few short hours should intervene,
Or years should pass, before we meet again,
I want the memory coming in between,
Of your strong, helpful word as spoken then.

So full it is of blessing, in the thought,
“May God be with you”—and I need that
prayer,
If but to face the next day’s duty brought,
Or called to meet some heavy load of care.
Then let me hear you speak it always, dear,
When from my path another way you move.
It seems to bring the Heavenly Father near,
To shield and guide me with His tender love.

A REGRET.

Where pleasure calls I would obey,
And move with willing feet,
But when necessity holds sway,
I sometimes miss a treat.

Tonight I sadly stay at home,
But I'll not needed be,
Since each girl calls her *chap her own*
He takes the place of me.

I know you will be just as nice
As though I met with you,
Enjoying fun and cake and ice,
The jolly evening through.

—YOUR WAS TO HAVE BEEN CHAPERONE.

AN INVITATION.

Come! Come!
You'd better run.
Presents for everyone under the sun.

Money will buy them,
Low prices too;
Just bring your purse and we'll satisfy you.

New Christmas gifts that are pretty and funny,
Better than others sold for same money.

Don't you forget us,
At five thirty-eight (538);
Out on North Randolph,
Your presence we'll wait.

So gladly we'll serve you,
With many things fine;
Respectfully yours,
Our names we would sign.—

LADIES OF BAPTIST CHURCH.

OUR PLATFORM.

(For Church Social.)

Although "free silver" is our call,
"Sixteen to one" is *not* our cry.
We've changed it so's to suit you all,
Suppose you come and try.

Our bill-of-fare is good and sweet,
Sixteen less one, our price.
Now bring your purse to Johnson street
And buy you something nice.

Three-thirty is the number neat
Tacked just above the door.
Walk in and see, and you will eat,
And quickly call for "more."

Bread and butter, cream and peaches,
Peach in cobbler, cake and pie
When your appetite this reaches
A second course please try.

Peaches pickled, peaches sliced
Peachy cheeks and peaches spiced;
Peaches raw and peach preserves
(Bring good digestions and strong nerves.)
And then to end with "extra nice"
Take a dish of rare peach ice.

REMEMBERED.

(Sent with souvenir album.)

Though memory's touch be tender,
It is strong and sure and deep,
So affection's voice will waken
From a sometimes seeming sleep.

Busy lives may seem neglectful
Toward old claims of days gone past,
But through every honest friendship
Runs a fibre that will last.

To you—our friends far distant—
Memory turns our thought to-day,
So we send this small reminder
Of the cousins up this way.

“I THINK I MUST BE GOING.”

(Last words of Grace Willis.)

Going—yes quietly going
Away from the earth-life dear,
Yet never a worry or question,
And never a shade of fear.

Going—e'en into Death's valley
'Mid shadows dark and chill,
Yet never a murmur against them,
And never a thought of ill.

Yes, going to meet her Master
Who died to show the way
Out of the Valley of Shadow
Into Eternal Day.

Just going away from sorrow
To the Home prepared above,
To one of the many mansions
Of endless light and love.

GRAYDON.

(To Bess V.)

To find a man like "Graydon Muir"

I've done my very best,

But it seems quite impossible

He's so unlike the rest.

Inclined to do the next best thing

Within my power to please,

I've sought and found his counterpart

Among the forest trees.

In general shape and style and mold

Not large or deep or thick

His character is fitly told—

A very light weight stick.

Please accept. N.

P. S.:

If you don't get mad and send him back

Just use him for a buttonhook rack.

N.

TOAST FOR CLASS OF '79.

(Theme, "Uncrowned Kings.")

Not often in this world of toil,
Do worthy deeds meet due regard,
And kings and queens in daily life,
Not always find their just reward.

Yet with its losses and its gains
Life is worth living faithfully
Look o'er our class as counted now,
We "kept our Pace," a king is he
Who claims a realm our country's width.
While Callie in a lesser sphere
Rules her small subjects perfectly,
With scepter which they all revere
A head uncrowned is Frank's indeed,—
E'en nature has not done her best,
But when it comes to brains within
He surely equals all the rest.
Then Laura brings to us her boys,
To whom she is in truth a queen,
While Livie rules the largest man
Among our number to be seen.

See Ella Forest—Stock her trade,
With gold and silver, Roy and Ed
And Lizzie Gamage,—Beaver caught
When she prepared to wed.
Yes, kings and queens are in our midst
And Dr. D. can make them crowns
Just go to him when toothache jumps
And let him drive away your frowns.

Not all are here. In distant states
Four classmates now have made their homes,
While other three have entered in
That "Country Whence No Traveler Comes."

Kind words of all. Kind thoughts for each,
In school day loyalty we give,
May these few words but serve to teach
That kings and queens among us live.

THE REASON.

(To M. W.)

“Why do I love you?” Tell me, dear,
The reason for my violet here,
Turning its leaves and dainty bloom
Laden with sweetest of all perfume
Away from the shadows of my room
To the clearer light of my window bright.
“Why do I love you?” Tell, dear heart,
Why, when the summer days depart,
The little bird swift wings his way,
Into the skies of southern day,
To bask in the light of warmer ray
And there in song, earth’s joys prolong.

As God’s kind care in Nature’s laws,
Moved flower and bird, so I, because
God guided me, turned, dear, to you
Meeting a friendship strong and true,
Changing old thoughts to pleasures new,
Unto the end, I’ll keep thee friend.

IN ARIZONA.

“In the good old summertime”
Of this Arizona clime
Where roses grow and bloom the whole year
round—
Just tell me if you can
Where you’ll find a better plan
Than to settle for a steady camping-ground.

With its sunshine pure and warm,
And bird music that can charm,
With trees so full and green and skies all bright,
Say—tell me, if you will,
Any happier place to fill
With joy, the hours of every day and night.

Winters warm or summers hot,
Either way it matters not,
(Save when a “most unusual spring” occurs)
’Tis the spot to find good health,
’Tis the place to spend good wealth,
So the traveler over all the globe, avers.

Are there flaws? Well just a few—
Not more than one or two,
Like windy days and hurricanes of sand.
But—who’ll remember these,
When in northern homes we freeze
And long in vain for glimpse of this Southland?

IF YOU REMEMBER.

If the voice which has spoken tenderly
Should change in its tone some day,
And words that seem quick and harsh perhaps,
Should answer some word you say,
Just try to remember the truth you know,
'Tis a loving heart,—time will prove it so.

If the hand which has clasped yours heartily
Should loosen its hold some day,
And the strengthening touch of sympathy
Should seem to be taken away,
Then try to remember that just the same
'Tis a loyal hand and will come again.

If the face which greets yours smilingly,
Should darken in sudden cloud,
And just where you need companionship
You feel alone in the crowd,
Right there remember—that face is true
And will turn again with its help to you.

For the friend who is walking quietly
In the path you daily tread,
Perhaps has lessons harder to learn
Than your life has ever read,
And if you remember to trust in love
That friend forever, more true shall prove.

TAKE COURAGE.

Are you weary in the Vineyard?
Does your work seem all in vain,
Yielding but a bitter fruitage
Of lost hopes, mistakes and pain?
Would you stop?

Ah! but listen! "Be not weary
In well doing. You shall reap,
If ye faint not. In due season
Comes the harvest."—do not weep.
Try again.

Have you spoken to some dear one,
Feeling that you'd gladly give
Anything within your power
If for Christ that soul should live?
Don't give up.

Has the burden proved too heavy
For your faltering faith to bear?
'Tis *His work* and you His worker,
For His own He shall well care.
Trust Him yet.

Would you reach the Heavenly Mansions
Bearing with you precious sheaves?
Patience then—He, loving watches
And the faithful child ne'er leaves.
So keep on.

OUR NEIGHBOR.

(To Mrs. Hughes.)

Who lives across on Center street,
Where honeysuckle grows so sweet,
And smiles on us whene'er we meet?
Our neighbor.

Who comes to sit awhile, and speak
Of various things that fill the week,
Helping to keep our spirits meek?
Our neighbor.

Who sends us doughnuts fresh and good,
Sweetening for us our daily food,
And leaving us in happy mood?
Our neighbor.

Who takes us in at dead of night,
And makes our troubles all come right,
Relieving us in serious plight?
Our neighbor.

Who merits everlasting praise,
For kindness shown in various ways
That we'll remember all our days?
Our neighbor.

V. V. D.—N. R. B.

A TOUCH IN PASSING.

A touch and smile as she passed along;
A glimpse—a word—and in the throng
She was lost to sight, but my heart grew strong
Because of her passing there.

My face was turned, and I had not known
A friend was near, till she had gone.
And left me feeling less—"alone"
After her greeting swift.

Such a little thing it was quite forgot
By her who gave it, I question not,—
But it marked for me the brightest spot
In the hours of my day.

I wonder how oft in life we stand
Close to some hungry heart's demand,
That we might answer with touch of hand
If we but looked for such.

'Tis the thing of all this great world needs,
Far more than doctrines, forms and creeds
The helpfulness of kindly deeds
In hearty friendliness.

'Tis the most we can do, after all you know.
A passing touch—and on we go.
Then why not give it often so,
In warmth of heart and hand?

THE HEART'S HAVEN.

(To B. L. B.)

In many climes my footsteps roam,
Up steeps, down dales where beauties are,
But whether it be near or far
My journey runs, 'tis best toward "home."

I love old earth. A touch divine
Has given us glory everywhere;
Yet nothing seems so good, so fair,
As the home roof-tree and its vine.

Wonders of man inspire my mind,
Wonders of God uplift my soul,
But through them all, to one sure goal
My heart turns back to home, I find.

Health, friends and pleasure. Yes, all these
May meet me in my pilgrim way,
And for them all, praise God to-day,
But most of all, for home's sweet peace.

TO WEE WILLIAM.

(Eight Weeks Old.)

Hello Wee William! How's the world?
Does it strike you pretty well,
Or are there lots of troubles
You'd like to try to tell?
Does grandma trot and rock you?
Do aunties pull your nose?
Does mamma stick you full of pins
In putting on your clothes?
Does papa toss and bounce you
And twist you into curves
That threaten quite to break your neck
Or shatter your young nerves?
Does grandpa talk big words to you
That most distract your brain?
Do cousins whisper "baby talk"
That really gives you pain?
Well, never mind, wee martyr,
There's a fine day coming yet,
When just a little older grown,
A sure revenge you'll get.
When colic strikes, and teeth crop out,
And creup and measles come,
With chicken pox and whooping cough
You sure can make things hum.

Insist on having meal time,
In the middle of the night,
Then make your time of rising
One hour before daylight.
Just keep them going lively,
For you owe it to them all,
And when there's nothing else to do
Fill up your lungs and—bawl.
'Tis a large responsibility
Your family to raise,
But I think you will eventually,
Succeed, deserving praise.
(To Wm. Blount Provine.)

WHEN SHE LEFT.

(For Bess V.)

When she left! O, wondrous leaving
Of this life so bravely borne,
'Mid the burdens of frail body,
Oftentimes so weak and worn.

And she left them all—these burdens;
Left them in the “shadow land;”
Questioned not, but at His bidding
Reached to take her Master’s hand.

Even though her dearly loved ones
She must leave to work alone,
She was ready still to answer
To His calling, “Child, come home.”

Hearts are sad and sore left lonely
In the place she made so dear,
Yet, could I call her back to you
I would not bring her here.

When she left this earthly dwelling
For the one not made by hand,
Ended then all pain and question
She had failed to understand.

Found, instead, Christ’s blessed sunlight,
With no good thing else denied;
In His presence there awakened,
In His likeness “satisfied.”

TO BABY ELLEN.

What shall I write for baby's eyes,
That shine with light from God's bright skies?

What shall I say for her pink ears?
It must be sweet, if baby hears.

What shall I wish for her wee hand,
That soon shall rule by love's command?

A loving word I long to give
Of the place where she has come to live.

A hope that her eyes may ever see
A beautiful world in her life to be.

A wish that to her ears may come
Earth's sweetest music—that of "home."

A prayer that her hands may find and do
The work of a woman strong and true.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY.

(To A. Eads.)

The evening had been a jolly one,
Where fun held full command
Till, just as the program was almost done,
The "Captain" was called to stand.

Surprised but yet unquestioning,
He rose before us all
To speak as only a man can speak
Who has answered his country's call.

The story, perhaps a common tale,
Of soldiers who fought and died,
But the heart that spoke through the captain's
voice
Opened our vision wide.

We saw, as before we had not seen,
Brave boys, full grown to men,
In moments of quick decision
That won our victories then.

Battlefields passed before our eyes—
Horror of shot and shell,
And suffering none but a soldier's word
And a soldier's heart could tell.

We felt that break in the captain's speech
Told pain we had never known,
As he lived that moment miles away,
In a world that was all his own.

A world of anguish, carnage and death,
Where men—just boys in years,
Could dare and do unflinchingly
Deeds moving yet, to tears.

Our hearts were touched to a deeper strength,
Our eyes to a larger sight,
Our lives to a higher, nobler aim,
By the captain's words that night.

May the God of Battles, leading now
Keep us in ranks as true
Till the pearly gates shall open wide
For His soldiers to pass through.

DEDICATION OF THE FISH POND.

On the hill-top by the water,
In the great Club House front door yard,
Stood the white man from the prairies,
Who had come for summer fishing
To the land of Sequanota.
Stooping was the white chief, busy
Fashioning a fountain wondrous
In the midst of the new fish pond,
On the Sequanota hill-top.

Through the tall grass by the sand-road
Came a band of strange new people.
Swift and stealthy was their coming,
Chocolate was their complexion;
Wild their eyes and wierd their costumes,
Striking silence to the white men
And their wives and children gathered
Round about their chief stone mason,
Who, so busy o'er the basin
Saw them not, nor heard their coming
Till he finished. Then uprising
Stood confronting that procession.
Speechless stood he—wondering, staring.

Sudden then, and harsh, blood curdling
Pugitabi raised his war whoop.—
Raised it high, and cleft the azure,
While each squaw by way of greeting
Grunted “Ugh!” and wierdly chanted
Strange new words of hidden meaning.

To the front, then came the big chief
—Checky Ankinig the mighty,—
Checky Ankinig the fighty,—
With a pipe of great dimensions
Filled with coffee, ground to fineness.
’Twas the peace-pipe, and he, lighting,
Smoked and passed it to the white man,
Saying in his Indian-English:
“White man come—big chief feel happy.
Like white man fer making fish pond.
When white man go back to prairies
Indian like white man still better,
Leaving fish in pond fer Indian
And his squaw to catch and eat them.
—Take this pipe, be friend to big chief,
Other white man—this bridge-builder—
Big chief likes for building bridges,
And this temahawk he gives him,
That *more* bridges he may fashion
In the land of Sequaneta,
Wendereous land of wondrous people.”

THE BRIDGE.

(Sequanota version.)

They sat on the bridge at noon-tide
As the people were passing by,
And the sun shone over the "Lake Front"
From out the autumn sky.

I wondered what was doing,
And could not help but look,
When sudden it dawned upon me,
"They are having their pictures took."

Miss Myra, Kellogg, and Lulu
And Alice and Mary and "Tom"
Miss Boulton, Miss Atwood and England
With pennant tight pinned on.

Against the long, gray rafters
The wavering shadows swung
Clouding three acres of landscape
That 'neath their shoe-soles hung.

And sweeping up from the houses
There came the old refrain
"How dark the air is growing,—
It must be going to rain."

Then I thought how very lucky,
That the launch ride failed to be,
For that mighty load of foot-gear
Would have swamped it fatally.

So, will that broken engagement
A source of rejoicing appear,
Since all that launching party
Is saved from a fate so drear.

FROM THE SEQUANOTA GIRLS.

Here's to the boys, the *little* boys!
The fellows who run, and make lots of noise.
We have them, we like them,—we claim them our
 own.
Fine manly chaps they will make when they're
 grown.
 The *little* boys.

Here's to the boys, the *older* boys!
The fellows who double all of our joys.
We want them, we'll keep them—but they are so
 few,
To increase the supply, say, what would you do
 For more big boys?

Here's to the boys, the *absent* boys!
The fellows who must stay in Charlevoix.
We miss them,—we'd like them, why don't they
 come near
To help on our summer of rest and good cheer,—
 The *absent* boys.

FROM THE SEQUANOTA BOYS.

Here's to the girls, the *little* girls!
Who wear their hair in braids and curls.
We have them, we'll keep them as long as we may,
To brighten the hours in many a day.
The *little* girls.

Here's to the girls, the *younger* girls!
Our colony's jewels, her rubies and pearls.
We have them, we like them, we want them for
good,
And would not give them up if you ask that we
should.
The *younger* girls.

Here's to the girls, the *older* girls!
Who smile and look sweet, till a fellow's head
whirls.
We want them, we'll get them—just give us a
chance.
Then keep your eyes open and look for romance
You *older* girls.

GALESBURG FOLKS.

(A tribute from Macomb.)

When the pleasant days fast flitting
Have left us winter's chill,
And we gather round our hearthstones
In the evening hour still,
Thinking over all our comforts
Quite forgetting every ill,
Then will come a thought inspiring
One that certain joy invokes,
When chief of summer blessings
We remember
Galesburg folks.

We have felt quite like "relations"
In one big happy home.
May that feeling be continued
Though paths apart must roam,
'Tis a comfortable notion—
That of kinfolks from Macomb,
And there comes a thought inspiring,
One that certain joy invokes,
When chief of summer blessings
We remember
Galesburg folks.

When the future years on-coming
 With toil and care are rife,
So we need to turn aside sometimes
 From out the toil and strife,
Looking back to Sequanota
 With its hearty wholesome life,
There will come a thought inspiring,
 One that certain joy invokes
When chief of summer blessings
 We remember
 Galesburg folks.

A LETTER.

Phoenix, Ariz., Feb. 24.

To Sequanota Club, Galesburg, Ill.:

Across the miles that stretch between
Your winter white and ours of green,
Glad thought returns to pleasures found
On Sequanota's camping ground;
And we would send "our best" to greet
Our summer friends' midwinter meet.

In midst of waving palm trees' shade,
In atmosphere that songs pervade
From gorgeous red-winged blackbird's throat,
We move in joy and scarcely note
Time's passing swift, till day has flown
And evening dons her silvery gown.

All star bedecked, in glory bright,
The beauteous Arizona night
Speaks soft to us, in undertone,
Of other nights that we have known,
In Sequanota's borders dear,
When you, to whom we write, were near.

From 'neath the graceful pepper tree,
By memory's eye, afar we see
(As of past days we think and talk)
The birches, near our Pine Lake walk.
Not apples in "the orchard" nigh,
But dates from branches hanging high.

A wondrous land of fruit and flower,
Of orange, olive, rose-clad bower;
Sweet oleanders, growing tall
(In pink and white the blossoms fall),
While like old sentinels of night
The giant cacti meet our sight.

At early night (no day is long)
There comes to us the burro's song,
Recalling many an evening spent
In clubhouse, where the air was rent
By solos, wafted strong and high
Against the Sequanota sky.

Sometimes we ride abroad, and fast
Beside the way has sudden passed
That hero of the eastern child,
The bold and brave "cow puncher" wild.
Astride his bucking broncho, he
Scorns folks who look so tame as we.

And brings a memory—hard indeed—
Of Dr. Becker's fiery steed
Attached to equipage so grand
That, driven with a haughty hand
And head upraised (intent to "snub")
Took Anna's "dummy" to the club.

The Navajo, so tall and straight,
Like Pugariti, towers great;
The fierce Apache, seeking foes,
Reminds of Cheeki's broken nose;
While "Hot tamales!"—warm as toast—
Suggest to us "Marshmallow roast."

So many things, so many ways
That speak of those departed days,
And, thinking of them now again,
We're glad we lived those hours then.
To you, who helped to make them good,
We write these lines in grateful mood.

Sincerely, your friends,

Per N. R. B.

THE WAY APPOINTED.

(To M. S.)

(Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty;
they shall behold the land that is very far off.—
Isaiah xxxiii, 17.)

“Could I but catch some glimpse of that fair
heaven,

While striving in the daily battles here,—
Could I but taste sometimes the blessed leaven,

I would forget so much of doubt and fear.
If Christ but walked to-day among earth’s lowly,
Show’ring His blessings freely upon all,

I think then I could make my life more holy.
When on my ear His words of help should fall.”
So reasoned I with self, one twilight dreary,

When half-wrought duties dropped from tired
hands,—

For in “well-doing” I was near grown “weary,”
And “pastures green” seemed like to barren
sands.

For labor in His vineyard I’d been longing,
Feeling that *largest* tasks would seem but
small.—

When homely duties to my hands came throng-
ing,

I felt I was not fit for work at all.

Taking then the Book of Comfort, from its page I
read of "rest;"—
"Come to me ye heavy-laden, leave your cares
upon my breast;
Ask, and to you shall be given; seek and know that
you shall find."
Seeing God in all your life-work, pure of heart
and peace in mind.
Longing for a sight of heaven,—look *within*, God's
kingdom lives;
Asking for the hidden manna,—to Him who *over-*
comes, Christ gives;
Needing Christ for daily helping,—“with you *al-*
way to the end;”
Owning then His blessed presence, “not His ser-
vant, but His friend.”
Would you do Him loving service,—to His “least”
is unto him;
Would you feel His hand in blessing,—turn a wan-
d’ring soul from sin;
Would you reach the heavenly mansions, in His
likeness “satisfied,—”
Hold the hand that He has given;— in His love
and care “*abide*.”

And now I thank thee, Lord, that thou are show-
ing,
In daily walks, small worries, pain and strife,
The way thou hast appointed for my going,
Ere I can claim the gift, Eternal Life.

Not through the martyr's flame, or flood to travel,
Or facing heathen foe in foreign lands,
But little trying puzzles to unravel,—
Just the fulfilling of each day's demands.
And since it is the "mission" then hast given,
Teach me to feel that it is planned in love;—
As thou didst visit earth to point to heaven,
Guide me through lowly work to that above;
As done for thee, help me to do each duty,
Seeing thine image in the lives I meet,—
Until—one day, I'll see the King in beauty,
And leave "my mission" finished,—at His feet.

In "Standard" 1893.

N. R. B.

ITALIAN WEATHER.

I have heard quite a dry story,
Of a lovely western town
Where a mackintosh goes begging
And umbrellas are unknown;
Where the rubber shoe abides not,
And gum boots ne'er appear,
For "three hundred sixty-five days
The sun shines in each year."

There they have no need of crossings,
Nor sidewalks do they use,
While the scraper and the footmat
Never meet with Phoenix shoes,
That's why I heard the story
By truthful (?) people told,
But 'tis looking just the least bit
Like some one had been fooled.

The dusky storm-clouds gather
Over peaceful Phoenix homes
And from the clouded mountain tops
Condensing "moisture" comes,
The flying dust is flowing now,
In rivers wide and deep
The dry and healthy atmosphere
Is laid away to "keep."

Now—mackintosh and rubber shoes
Are worth their weight in gold;
“No need of walks in Phoenix”
Is a tale that once was told.

To clean the traveler's muddy shoes,
Footmats and scrapers? No indeed!
A bath tub of clear water
And a sponge, best suit the need.

“Just three hundred sixty-five days
You'll find the sky is clear,”
Is the story oft repeated
Of the Phoenix atmosphere.

There seems but one conclusion
Where the mind can safe arrive
That Phoenix has five hundred days
To our three sixty-five.

A TOURIST.

THE BEST REWARD.

So softly spoken, low and sweet,
It fell on my ear as I took my seat
By my dear big girl, to just repeat
In my heart, her "Thank you, dear."

A word for Christ, in longing pure
That by His strength it might endure
And find a lodgment firm and sure,
I spoke in His dear name.

'Tis good to know a help is given,
To lift some soul yet nearer Heaven.
'Tis worth the having toiled and striven
To learn how to do that.

But dearer, better—even best
Of all response to prayer's request
To find a help at home, at rest
In the heart of a precious friend.

Such joy is mine this Sabbath night,
Seeing her face in its tender light
Of true desire to better fight
The battle of life God gives her.

It is sweet and strong and childlike too,
This face of "my girl,"—and as few things do,
It holds my heart to the good and true
And for this—I thank her now.

TO MRS. TWEED.

Lessons learned we oft forget,
But since the other day I met
The article before you set,
 I will remember,
Put in it eggs or beef or fish
Or any other thing you wish
It still remains a salad dish.
 Yours most sincerely,

NELL R. BLOUNT.

FOR VALUE RECEIVED.

For pleasant word and smiling face,
For easy, hearty, helpful grace,
Cheering my mood in many a place,
My thanks accept.

For music's charm, so soft, yet sure,
Winging my heart to heights more pure,
In strong desire that must endure,
My thanks accept.

The uplift needed oft, may come
Not voiced in words, but spirit shown,
The touch of yours, has helped my own.
My thanks accept.

Sincerely,

N. R. B.

CALMED.

There's a storm upon the waters,
And its angry rush and roar
In the billows plunging, leaping
From the distant farther shore,
Strike dismay to hearts discouraged
When the dark waves threaten high
Quick the call, "Awake! O, Master!
Carest Thou not that we shall die?"
Speaks a voice of wondrous power
To the heaving, surging sea,
"Peace. Be still." Then all is quiet
On the raging Galilee.

Comes a tumult in thy living?
Threaten mighty waves of woe?
Does the sky grow dark about you,
So you cannot see to go?
Beats the wind of unjust judgment
Cutting deep into your heart?
Call to Him who once so felt it.
He of all your life is part.
Hear His voice in benediction,
As your cries to Him ascend,
"Fear ye not. Lo, I am with you,
Always, even to the end."

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

A gay little bird whose active wing
Carried him close to my window here,
Sang as happy birdies sing,
And troubled thought was soon made clear.
My heart uplifted in quick praise
For help that comes on hardest days.

A dear little girl, whose loving thought,
Slipped into my own, her clinging hand,
Spoke as sweet lives, Heaven-taught,
Give message sad hearts understand.
My soul responded in a prayer,
Thanks giving for God's daily care.

While the little bird had never pressed
His wing through clouds like dimmed my sight,
Yet on the darkness in my breast,
He flashed Heaven's pure sunlight,
While the little girl knew not what tried.
Her hand led straight to the Helper's side.

WHAT MATTER?

In many paths on life's long road,
From these homes of earth to the Home of God,
What matter, dear, which way we tread
 So our aim be straight
 Toward the narrow gate,
And we walk as we are led?

And though sometimes we quite lose sight
Of each other's way in the dark of night—
What matter, if when sorely tried
 We see His face
 At the crossing place,
Though we miss all else beside?

'Tis a narrow road and the veil between
Your path and my own, is just a screen,
What matter then if we see not through?
 I know you are near,
 And you need not fear,
But that I will come to you.

Keeping with Him, there is but one end
To this road of life we must all trend.
What matter how our pathways wend
 If out of the strife
 Of the earthly life,
Our Master we learn to know?

A TRANSPLANTED FLOWER.

(To the memory of Helen Rogers Armstrong.)

The master walked in his garden, one chilly autumn day,

And beckoned to the keeper—"I'll take this flower away.

The winter winds are coming, and in the biting blast,

'Twould quickly droop. I'll move it, where it shall bloom and last.

In one of my bright south windows, transplanted carefully,

'Twill shed its helpful fragrance, and gladden all who see.

It mars the garden's beauty to take the best away,
But in the sunny window see what is placed to-day.

And when the Spring shall open, all fresh, and bright and sweet,

This flower shall greet your vision, its beauty all complete."

The Master, Christ, in His garden, walking one sad, dark day,

Spoke to His garden-keeper—"I'll take this flower away,

For life's hard winds are coming, and in the bitter chill

'Twould suffer much. I'll move it, where comes
no hurting ill.

In one of the many mansions, transplanted by my
care,

'Twill live, and grow to beautify the Heavenly
Home so fair.

It robs the home of beauty, to take the flower of
love,

But, in eternal gardens, 'twill wait for you above.

And when life's winter ended, safe in the Other
Home,

In wondrous beauty glorified, you'll find your
precious one.

“IT WASN’T IN THE BOOKS.”

(To C. A. J.)

He came from eastern prairie-lands,
All covered white with snow,
To seek the Arizona sands
Where stones and cacti grow.
He studied well his railroad guides,
The whole long journey out,
Until the western country
He knew everything about,
As printed in the books.

The cowboy and the broncho gay,
The burro and his song,
Sweet music of the birds all day
The green tree boughs among,
The perfect roads with driving good,
Throughout the whole long year;
The pure, unclouded sunshine
Full of health and hearty cheer,
These were printed in the books.

He raised his head and spread his chest
Arrived in Phoenix town,
Endeavoring to see the best
In redman, white and brown.
To curio and ostrich farm,
To mines and orange groves
He went in eager spirit,
That the pleasure-seeker knows,
When following out the books.

Awakened one dark morning
By sound like dripping rain,
He turned (such thought quick scorning)
Closed his eyes and slept again,
Till a good half hour after
He heard the "breakfast" call,
And raising high his window,
Saw the earth in darkest pall,
Such as wasn't in the books.

Rain in drops, and sheets, and rivers,
On the Phoenicians came,
And through four days gave them shivers,
Though they wouldn't own the same.
Mud, adown the perfect roadway
In flowing torrents broke,
While the earth remained enveloped
In an atmosphere like smoke.
Not mentioned in the books.

This poor, deluded mortal
From snowy lands so cold,
Began to smile and shake his head
At stories that were told.
“Yes, quite unprecedented;
Oldest inhabitants
Haven’t seen the like of weather
Since the days of Indian dance,
That you read of in the books.”

But, being a philosopher,
(As tourists mostly must)
He waited for the sky to clear,
And dry the flowing dust,
And now, in sunshine bright and warm
He basks and meditates,
“Well, after all, it matters not
“What anyone relates
In the pages of the books.”

“Because in ‘Arizona air’
There’s something fine and pure,
That through all kinds of weather
Has a strength that will endure.
Just call it anything you wish,
Locate it as you may,
Words can’t suggest or picture it,
Or drive its charm away,
Or yet tell it in the books.”

THE SILVER LINING.

These days of autumn splendor,
When earth seems glad and bright,
My thought, uplifted, reaches
A larger, purer height.

My heart grows strong and eager;
My mind seems quick and clear,
To think and speak God's praises,
When only joy is near.

But when the darkness gathers,
And cares make long my day,
Do I then as surely thank Him
For leading all the way?

When tired brain and body,
Under burdens sore, have cried,
And anxious hope is weakening
For the boon that seems denied.

When hands outstretched and trembling
Just fail to reach the prize,
And precious treasure slips away
Before my longing eyes,

When words unjust are spoken,
And aims misunderstood,
While but mistaken effort
Seems the work I meant for good,

Then—can I say as quickly,
“Dear Lord, I take Thy will;
Whatever comes, e’en darkness,
Is thy benediction still?”

I plead, O, Heavenly Father!
For Thine all abundant power
To give me strength in weakness,
For each bitter, testing hour.

Grant me the sweet possession
Of an ever present Lord,
To quiet my life’s tempests,
By His softly spoken word.

Give me faith to pierce the shadows
That but veil His glorious might,
So I may work in patience,
’Till the dawning Morning Light.

OTHER THINGS.

(To F. B. P.)

"You see, it was my first Thanksgiving away from home, and then—some other things—well, never mind."

Heart speaks to heart
Of thoughts that filled a long and lonely day,
Faced bravely in that strength each hour brings;
Tells of a burden found along the way
And then, impulsive, adds—"Some other things—
Well! never mind!"

Could we but tell.
Ah, yes!—These "other things" if we but knew,
How deep would probe our vision into life.
If we could read the heart-thought clear and true
How much would be revealed of deep soul-
strife.
But "never mind!"

Some things there are
Touching these lives, not meant for friendly shar-
ing
Because the Father would a lesson show—
A lesson just for self—whose patient bearing
Gives strength the battling soul alone can know.
Then "never mind!"

'Tis better so.
And when shall come that day of last reward,
For burdens we have borne through love of
Him,
I think the dearest "well done" from our Lord
Will be for "other things" that He has seen.
So "never mind!"

IN "THE GARDEN OF THE GODS,"
MANITOU, COLORADO.

What hand has shaped these outlines
Of man and beast and bird?
Was sound of the workman's chisel
Within these gates once heard?
What painter's brush has traced them
In tints of red and gold?
What voice had power to call them,
These wonders manifold?

Born at voice of that Master
Who said—"Let there be light."
Framed by hand of that Workman
Who made the day and night.
'Neath the sweep of that magic brush
Which painted tree and flower
A garden of the gods in truth,
For here is Godlike power.

He—who at night looked on his work
And saw that it was "good,"
Has left His presence lingering here
In blessing where He stood.
The peace of Nature breathes on us
From distant mountain peaks.
The loving heart uplifted here,
With its Creator speaks.

HE GOT THERE.

Up the garden pathway, slowly,
Her hat back on her head,
Comes a sorry looking maiden,
With hands and face all red.

As mamma sees her coming,
She waits with sober face,
To hear from Nan the story
Of this—the last disgrace.

The week has been full of trouble;
Each day, from morn till night
Some tangle to be straightened,
Some wrong to be set right.

The busy traveling feet,
And inquiring little head,
Into forbidden pathways
The naughty girl had led.

She'd cooked the stuffed owl for "turkey,"
"Playin' Thanksgiving, you know,"
And put feathers in the flower bed,
"To have some chickies grow."

Her kitty will remember
Throughout his nine-lived age,
The day he helped "play circus"
As a lion in his cage.

The cage was the warming oven,
And little Nan "forgot"
Till Mary built a fire
That made poor kitty hot.

'Twas one thing then another
All done in thoughtlessness,
And now—the last and hardest—
She comes—faults to confess.

A winsome little face she has—
A merry heart is hers,
But something much like sorrow
The childish spirit stirs.

As mamma looks upon her,
Sees stains on face and dress,
She thinks of a recent promise
And the trouble she can guess.

In one corner of the garden
The bush of berries stands
And, bending head before her—
Is Nan with tell-tale hands.

“What does this mean, my daughter;
 Couldn't you keep away;
Did you forget your Sunday verse
 That you had learned to say?

That ‘Get behind me, Satan,’
 Did you remember then?”
“Mamma, I said it hard's I could
 And then, I said it again;

And, mamma, he DID get behind me
 And gave me AN AWFUL PUSH,
And before I could try to stop him
 He'd pushed me right INTO THE BUSH.”

MORAL.—Keep away from the bushes.

A VALENTINE.

(To W. J. P.)

You may talk about your roses red,
And dainty violets blue,
And Cupid with his arrows
Through hearts of flaming hue;
Of lovely maidens, dreamy-eyed
With peachy cheeks and brows of pearl,
But when it comes to valentines
My thought reverts to "just one girl."

She may not look as some folks do,
"Ten thousand beauty" style,
But there's a—something strong and fine
In glowing of her smile.
It shines so warm and helpfully,
With message of good cheer,
That pleasures of one's life increase
And sorrows disappear.

A wholesome personality,
Whose pleasant, hearty voice
Can talk good, common sense at length,
Or sing sweet strains at choice.
And when it comes to working hard
She demonstrates her right
To teach a school, or keep a house
Or shine a higher light.

She is just a "common" body,
Yet quite uncommon too;
If all the rest were like her
The world would be made new.
A typical American
Is she, my valentine,
And the best that I can wish you,
Is to find one just like mine.

TO "THE PURITANS."

(Per Edna J.)

To the honored pale-face sisters
On the Hill Top of the West End,
Pocahontas sends a message
By the hand of squaw most trusty.
Sends her band of loveliest maidens
Found in all the prairies' borders.
Maidens trained in every good deed
Known in tepee, field and forest.
From her wigwam in the First Ward,
Pocahontas thinks upon you
At the hour of falling darkness
Sees you gathered by your wood-fire
Where she much has longed to greet you,
But must linger sad and lonely
By the firelight in her wigwam,
Till the night air, chill and grippe-y
Has all vanished into sunshine.
—In her stead her maidens greet you
With the vow of peace and favor,
Toward their noble pale-face sisters
Who so kindly join to welcome
To your home on Baker Hill Top.
May the sunshine and the moonlight
Send their spirits through your roof-tree,
And the laugh of rippling waters
Mix and mingle in your talking,—

That this night-time long remembered,
May give thoughts of joy and gladness
Which will stay with every maiden,
(Pale-face squaw or copper-colored)
Through full many days of living
On these prairies, or in far lands,
Whereso'er their footsteps wander.
—Take this greeting, pale-face sisters,
From the hand of faithful maidens
Who shall bear this message to you
From the heart of Pocahontas.

FRAGMENTS.

In His good time, in His own way
God answers prayer we voice to-day
And though the "waiting" long should prove
What matters it, since 'tis His love
Withholding, that the hour supreme
Shall but perfect our holiest dream?

For every "giving up" that we have done,
If great or small,
When in the name of Christ the Blessed One,
God sees it all,
And counts to us, for idols overthrown
Treasures far greater than we yet have known.

POP CORN JOHNNIE.

(Sent with man made of ear of pop corn.)

To see you safely home this eve
 Would please me beyond measure,
So if your heart it will not grieve
 I'll gladly take that pleasure.
You see, I rather like your way
 And hope you think I'm "sweet,"
Because most folks who know me, say
 "Quite good enough to eat."
Perhaps *some* things that bright men know
 Are far beyond my reach,
But there's one thing that I can show
 If they'll but let me teach.
Name their accomplishments all through,
 Then let me place on top
One which shall crown all worth to you,
 Ability to "pop."

UNFADING.

(To M.)

“Why do I keep dead blossoms
When so many fresh and fair
Hang fragrant on the bushes
Scenting the summer air?”

You call them dead and worthless,
Wilted and brown and dry.
Yes,—but they waken memories
That will not fade and die.

Quick hands outstretched and eager,
To give the blossoms sweet;
A young face bright and loving
My welcoming smile to meet;

Soft, tender fingers touching
Each flower caressingly
Complete the memory picture
In these faded flowers I see.

“My little girl,” I name it
And in my weary hours
I see it flash before me
From out the wilted flowers.

COMPLETENESS.

("I live my life so incompletely!"—B. F. A.)

Incomplete? Yes, even so,
If we measure results by garnered grain;
And *failure* oft-times seems our dearest plan
As we look over fields of pain.
But the Maker, whose love designed it,
His work will perfect in each
If we but try in patience
The lessons He would teach.
He gathers each earnest effort;
He numbers each kindly word
And the heart-thought true and tender,
He counts as if 'twas heard.
The motive that prompts the action
Misjudged by others may be,
But the all-wise Heavenly Father
The wish of the heart will see.
Omissions, mistakes and failures
That discourage and try us so
To Him are loving offerings
If *we do the best we know*.

A LETTER FROM SANTA CLAUS.

(For Christmas eve exercise.)

(A little girl speaks, with a letter in her hand.)

Dear friends we're glad to see you here,

And hope you're glad to stay.

We shall try to entertain you

But are very sorry to say

Old Santa Claus can't help us

As he has done every year,

But sends instead a letter

To say why he can't be here.

I'll tell you all about it

And I'm sure you'll say its right,

Though I know you are disappointed

That he is not here tonight.

(Turns to bear, who comes walking to the front.)

Before I speak any longer

I think it is only fair

To give an introduction

To our good friend "Mr. Bear."

(Bear makes his bow.)

He comes from where old Santa lives

And brings us from his store

Boxes, bundles, books and toys

More than ever came before.

With them he brought a letter

From Santa's great big hand.

I'd have him read it to you,

But you could not understand

So *I* will try to do it
As it came addressed to me.
Now, hear the reason given
Why no Santa Claus you see.
(Tears open letter and reads.)
NORTH POLE, AMERICA, Dec. 18, 18—.

Dear friends, with great regret
I take my pen to write
That I must stay at home and rest
This coming Christmas night.
Through all the year I've labored
And haven't I been busy!
Hurrying round at such a rate
It almost made me dizzy.
I've made so many presents
I had to build more room
And jam it full of Christmas gifts
In fact, I've had a boom.
Business was good, but I'm tired out,
And almost sick in bed
Dr. Frost says, "*Stay at home,*
Or next year, you'll be dead."
So here I am, and here I'll stay
For some three months, and then
I'll set my work shop going
For Christmas work again.
Just look for me next Christmas
And surely I'll be there.
Now, in my place please to accept
My friend and helper—Mr. Bear.

(Bear bows and begins taking presents from tree.)

HEARD ON THE CORNER.

They stood at school's dismissal
To talk at the corner awhile.
Her face downcast and sober,
His, beaming broad in smile.

"Thanksgivin' Day tomorrow—
Jolly! I'm glad its come.
No school again till Monday.
And heaps o' fun at home.

"We're goin' to have a turkey
And cranberry sauce and pies,
And—Say! Why you lookin' so cross-like
And kind o' mad in your eyes?"

"Guess you'd look mad in my place,
With no turkey or nothing good,
And just to have an old dinner,
Of meat and potatoes for food.

"How would you have Thanksgivin'
With nothing to 'thank you' about?
If you just lived at my house,
I guess then you'd find out."

Slightly nonplussed, he faltered—
Then with quick protesting face,
Questioned: "Well, ain't your father
Just got him a good sure place?"

"Ain't your mother well o' the fever?
Gee! That's Thanksgiving enough.
I'll bet I could have a good one
Without any turkey and stuff."

“TIME IS SHORT.”

Yes, the time is short—so short, my friend,

 We should not keep its shade,

For soon—so soon must come the end

 To all that life has made.

The things we leave behind us,

 To count when life is done,

Are the loving deeds that bind us

 To the dear ones left at home.

Yes, the time is short—so short, dear one,

 That our tasks are over-planned ;

Many we know are poorly done,

 As they fall from a hurried hand ;

But the Maker of All, Who knows us,

 “Remembereth that we are dust.”

Let us live as we think He shows us,

 Leave results with Him, in trust.

Yes, the time is short—so short, dear heart,

 We dare not make it vain,

It seems so little is set apart

 For joy—and so much for pain ;

So many to need the sunny smile

 And words that are kindly said ;

Flowers given to the living

 Count more than to the dead.

TO YOU.

(Non-subscribers.)

Have you seen it? Have you read it?

If you haven't, hurry then,
For I tell you that Gazette man
Doesn't stop and bite his pen.
When the news is in the air,

Quick he settles down to work,
Ruffles up his smooth front hair
And goes at it like a Turk.

That's the reason that the items
Are bright and fresh and new;
That's the way you find what's doing
And where and when and who.
And the day that things have happened
That same evening they appear
In the columns of his paper,
Plain and straight and true and clear.

"Hustler?" well now you are talking,
For that paper leads the way
In the boom that sure is starting
And is headed straight this way.
If you want to keep things moving
For Arizona's fame
Just pay in your subscription,
And give your street and name.

WORTH WHILE.

So swiftly move the passing years,
So close are blended hopes and fears,
So full is life of bitter tears,
We may forgive,—we should forget.
Not ours to pay the avenger's debt.

So many lives to need our aid,
So many hearts weak and afraid,
Let's leave that injury unpaid.
God makes it right, someday, somewhere,
And you and I can end it there.

No time for aught but loving toil.
We must not waste—we dare not spoil
The days that come, nor e'er recoil,
If they demand some sacrifice
That seems perhaps a costly price.

Things worth the while, must always cost.
Things "given up" need not mean "lost."
Bread on the waters freely tossed,
After long days shall come again
With sure reward that shall remain.

So many graves in Oakwood now,
That were not made one year ago,
And you and I may never know
How close upon the border-land
Our wayward feet today may stand.

Putting behind those hurts and stings,
Forgetting all but helpful things,
Welcome each day with good it brings.
The past, all gone—the present here.
Live to the full a glad New Year.

AN ANSWERING FACE.

Across the crowded hall my glance had wandered,
As waiting music's sweet-toned voice again,
A little while in dreamy thought I pondered,
Longing to put in words that wondrous strain.
Aimless, I looked — not heeding, little caring,
Where roved my eye. That harp-voice had
reached down
So deep into my heart, that I was sharing
In heavenly visions to the world, unknown.

Uplifted far above the commonplace
As though a veil, I gazed on all around,
When, in one glance, I saw an answering face,
Another heart, the music's soul had found.
It spoke through softened glance and tender light
Of features I had lately learned to love.
My new found friend did your thought know to-
night
How close with it my own trod courts above?

Oh, sweet companionship of kindred souls,
By which in pleasant paths our feet are led
To find that deepest thought is understood,
Although oft times no spoken word is said.
Communion closer such than many know,
When hand in hand and face to face they talk,
For heart to heart in friendship's path we go,
Though far apart our daily steps may walk.

IT IS WRITTEN.

(Dec. 31.)

“What I have written, I have written.”—Pilate.

Have I written on the pages
Of the year so swift gone by,
Thoughts to live through endless ages
Or in deep oblivion die?
Have my days been worth the living
To my friends, in helpful giving,
Reaching to the fullest measure,
Good, that deeper is than pleasure?

Have I written on the faces
In my daily walk in life,
Hope and peace—or are there traces
Of a burden, or of strife?
Sympathy so much is needed—
Have I seen and have I heeded?
My loss greater than the other,
If I failed to help a brother.

Have the little children brightened
At my hearty, welcoming word,
Or tender hearts been frightened
By some quick reproof they heard?

Was the stranger in our meeting
Gladder made by earnest greeting,
Or, blinded selfishly, have I
Erred in path of charity?

What is written I have written—
And my hand cannot erase
Many things—that conscience smitten—
I would gladly now efface.
Words unworthy, actions hurried,
Things I wish were dead and buried.
But they live—and I regretting,
Long to know of their forgetting.

Only God can make it whiter,
All the record I have scanned,
And my heavy heart grows lighter
'Neath the shadow of His hand.
Clean and new the page He's turning,
While my soul in honest yearning,
Lifts to Him its eager pleading,
For His constant, kindly leading.

GOOD-BYE OLD YEAR.

So 'tis "good-bye," old friend,—
You've done so much for me.
In days all told, more rich than gold
Your kindly gifts I see.
In quiet now, I face the end
Waiting to say, "Good-bye, old friend."

Good-bye, old year,—good-bye.
'Tis hard to let you go,
For there are ways in your past days
That just we two may know
Ways leading far o'er mountains high,
But now to them must be good-bye.

And words—heart-words so true,
Whose tones could tell so much,
Eyes brave and clear, strong hands so dear,
E'en yet I feel their touch.
And shall they go with me or you?
Tell me, old year, must they go too?

You claim them for your own?
Ah, well! So let it be,—
But of my heart, they form such part
You cannot take from me.
So take your own and I take mine:
I would not give what's mine for thine.

A PRAYER.

O, Father! Lead Thy child,
While the fierce storm and wild
Blows round about me!—
Let me ne'er doubt Thee!
My hand in Thine safe hold,
Shield me in night and cold,
Till safe within the Fold
Thy care hath brought me.

O, Master! Come to me
Now in my need of Thee!
Quiet the storm within,
Save me from self, again;
Take Thou my wayward will,
My heart with peace now fill,
That I may follow Thee
On path of charity!

HIS REST.

Have you heard his invitation
Weary heart, by care oppressed?
Have you told to Him the conflicts
That have raged within your breast?

He is waiting to receive you
And forever grant you peace;
Turn to Him and let His helping
From your burden give release.

Not a peace that means *forgetting*,
But a strength to bear and use,
Every circumstance that enters
In your life,—as He shall choose.

Pain and failure, sorrow, sickness
Such as come to every life
He will touch and turn to blessing
Yielding strength from all the strife.

Strength that only comes with battling;—
Peace that follows *victory*.
Would you have them? Let the Master
Lay His "easy yoke" on Thee.

UNDERSTOOD.

It is not for explanations
Or the *why* to prove pain right;
It is not for kind assurance
That I've bravely met the fight,—
But 'tis left the quiet heart-tone
Or loving clasp of hand
To bring the needed comfort
From one who can understand.

Kind friends with grateful praises,
To speak the help I've given,
Seeming to think my journey
Is easier turned toward Heaven,—
And few—so few, remember
That every life must bear
Its portion of pain and sorrow,—
Its weakness—sometimes despair.

So when one meets me, knowing
That I am of common clay
Tired, discouraged and lonely,
And will simply, kindly say—
“Ah, yes! I know—I have felt it,”
Some way it lifts my load,
To clasp the hand of this other
Traveling the selfsame road.

A PSALM OF TRUTH.

(Apologies to Longfellow.)

Tell us not in many voices,
To "go south and then go east,"
For we followed those directions
To Miss Miner's wedding feast.

Mud was deep and mud was sticky,
And we traveled several hours
Just to view the lovely landscape
And eat lunch between the showers.

Much enjoyment and no sorrow
Was our destined lot that day,
Although each succeeding corner
Found us further from the way.

Roads were long and time was fleeting,
But we wanted all the fun
To be found inside the county
So we gayly traveled on.

Miles and miles and miles we journeyed
Just to breathe the country air,
And our joy had been perfected
If we'd only seen Adair.

On that morning of the wedding
In that journey to southeast,
We were taught full many a lesson
Which the following was not least.

Trust not Miner, howe'er certain
He may seem to know the way,
For he sure will misdirect you,
And in quick derision say,

"Did you go south and then go east
And watch the telephone wires in air?
Why *sure you lost your way four miles*
And must have seen Adair."

There were also other torments,
George's "Number One"—and "Two,"
Who must every half a minute
Each present his special view.

Heed them not. They are not worthy
Of a passing, slightest glance.
Long black bottles their companions,
And they steal when given a chance.

Cherries, chickens, even turkeys
Were not safe within their sight,
And the bride was boldly robbed too
Of a kiss, George claimed his *right*.

Trust no Georges, howe'er seeming
True and honest in their speech.
They are simply waiting, watching
For some tease within their reach.

"Did you go south and then go east
And watch the telephone wires in air?
Why *sure*—you lost your way four miles
And must have seen Adair."

Never mind, deluded mortals,
All your words are but a waste,
For we drove as we desired,
And found fun to suit our taste.

All the journey and the wedding,
Bride and groom and guests and home,
Kept us many times remarking
"We are surely glad we've come."

Roses of the bride remind us
Of the pleasures of the day
While the dogs that chased behind us
Lead us now to think and say,

"Life is sweet and life is bitter
Some things good and some things sad,
And we've learned to never listen,
When untruthers fool us bad."

Words of such men will remind us,
We can do our driving best
And departing, leave behind us
Wheel tracks that shall guide the rest.

Wheel tracks that perhaps another
Driving through some rainy day,
May take heart, on seeing plainly,
Follow quick, and find the way.

Let us, then, discard directors
And insisting we are right,
Just go on as sense commands us
And get home before 'tis night.
"THE BIG FOUR."

GOD KNOWS.

Over the grave of the unknown sleeper was placed a simple headstone, bearing the words, "God Knows."

God knows—Ah, yes! What countless things
Are hidden from this human sight,
That we can only leave with Him
Till dawns the glorious Morning Light.
Unnumbered graves on unknown hills,
Like that on lonely Nebo's mount,
Forgotten or unknown by man,
And only God Himself, keeps count.

God knows—Ah, yes! The mysteries
That weary many an aching heart,
By Him are seen and understood
Before the bitter tear-drops start.
He knows just why that good must go;
Just why that hurting ill must stay.
We cannot know. We only trust,
Remembering that God guides the way.

God knows—Ah, yes! What comfort 'tis
To know the eye that never sleeps
Sees all that is,—and every life
In constant watchful memory keeps.
He knows the hopes yet unfulfilled;
He knows the plan, the loss, the gain.
He sees the depth of every soul
And understands its joy and pain.

God knows—Oh, yes! He knows each heart,
And looking beyond that seen by man
He reads the motive pure and true
That lived before mistakes began.
He sees the aim and not the deed,
And “wrong” in man’s sight, oft may claim
From His just judgment, the “Well done!”
For then hast labored in My name.”

God knows—Ah, yes! Our Father knows
The least one of His children’s needs,
Seeing the want of every heart
Far better than the heart that pleads.
He knows *all* things, and this *we* know,
“He doeth all things for the best.”
Then gladly let us leave all there
Safe in Our Father’s care to rest.

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